



Animal Doctors

Our Stories - A Great Place To Do Business

Team approach a winning formula

If having the right attitude is the secret to success then Steve and Lorraine Rose need to bottle and market their enthusiasm.

The Animal Doctors is a Port Macquarie business still relatively in its infancy. Operating for just three years from its Lake Road premises, the business has flourished under the positive leadership of its owners and a 'team' environment that nurtures compassion, honesty, consistency and knowledge throughout all facets of the operation. And the minute you walk through the door, you realise there's something special about this 'team' and the way in which they have all embraced and are a part of Steve and Lorraine's journey.

"We don't have 'staff' here - we're a team, we're in it together. This is a family-owned business and as far as

we're concerned, they are all part of our family and all do their bit to make it work," Steve said.

Both veterinary science graduates, Steve and Lorraine moved to Port Macquarie for work as much as lifestyle, and with a vision to open a business founded on a philosophy of compassionate care delivered with sincerity.

Success however relies on many other factors and both, without any prior business 'know-how,' sought the help of advisors from the outset to ensure critical mistakes were avoided.

"We knew we were in it for the long haul," Steve said. "We ensured we had an incredibly detailed business plan with all of our cost projections before we went to the bank. This proved to be an excellent blueprint for our goals, objectives, our mission statement and

how we hoped to be different to our competitors.

"Our aim initially was to provide a service that we were proud of and could go home at the end of the day and know we were providing the same level of care for our customers' pets that we'd expect ourselves."

The doors opened on March 14, 2005 and it was clear from the start, their early preparations had paid off.

"The work we had put in before we could even open the doors was intense in terms of trying to create a retail store and clinic, provide our customers with the services and products they need now, while predicting what we might need to do in the future as the business grew.

"We're not just vets here - we're counsellors, business owners, employers, parents - up to 50 percent



Animal Doctors - Jodie Scaysbrook and Steve Rose with Toby.



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of my day is managing the issues that affect our clients and the team.” Their formula was spot on – six months after the doors opened growth had surpassed their expectations. Steve and Lorraine began employing the first of their four team members. Jodie Scaysbrook brought eight years of veterinary nursing experience and a science degree to the clinic and was the extra pair of hands Steve needed to ensure the level of service he expected for his customers was met. Nicole Cameron, Veronica Murtagh and Natalie Fuhrer joined the ranks soon after with the latest addition, Dr Clare Bumak, coming on board when Steve and Lorraine had their first child.

No journey is without its speed bumps though and like many new business owners, finances became the stress trigger. “The work we put into our business plan saved us a lot of grief but didn’t completely safeguard us. We had a cost blowout on our fittings and flooring but were able to compensate by revising our plan. “We refused family financial support because we wanted to do it on our own and for it to be completely our responsibility. “Final Council approval was our biggest hurdle and greatest stress but there was no time at all where we stopped and thought ‘why are we doing this?’.

The decision to start a family brought with it personal re-adjustments. Lorraine took a step back from clinic work after the birth of Zali and focused more on the management of the business. Steve and Lorraine have also entrusted their staff with the business to ensure Zali, born profoundly deaf, has her own personal needs met. “Our success is our customer-focus – we are up-front and good value. We are very proud of what we have achieved. As our team continues to evolve through on-going education and opportunity, so will the business because we all share the responsibility for its success.”

- *Animal Doctors is a proud champion of the Customer Care program.*

Our journey:

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Steve Rose, Animal Doctors



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